PRESS RELEASE

Advancing empowerment and inclusion of Black Europeans: ENAR concludes study tour to the United States

Washington, D.C., 28 November 2013: ENAR Vice-Chair Jallow Momodou and other activists from the ENAR network have concluded their participation in a study tour to the United States of America for Europeans of African descent. The tour was sponsored by the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) with the support of the U.S. Helsinki Commission and the U.S. Department of State.

The study tour sought to advance empowerment, equality, inclusion, and civil rights for Europeans of African descent through a series of consultations in Washington, D.C. with government officials, foundations, research institutions, and academia. ENAR joined representatives for organisations from 11 countries (Austria, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Malta, Moldova, Poland, Slovenia, Sweden, Ukraine, and United Kingdom) with leading roles in advocating for people of African descent facing challenges throughout Europe.

ENAR emphasised the urgent need for an EU framework to improve the social inclusion of people of African descent and Black Europeans and to recognise Afrophobia as a specific form of racism. This framework is essential to complete and reinforce the current EU equality and anti-discrimination legislation and policies. The purpose of the study tour was also to develop partnerships for sustainable sponsorships of European-wide policy efforts and vital community resources. Jallow Momodou spoke at a Congressional hearing and met with representatives at the Swedish Embassy in Washington, D.C. to discuss the need to partner with the United States to access resources and advance progressive initiatives in combating the increasing Afrophobia in Sweden and in Europe. Study tour consultations included key meetings and participation in events with:

- Advisers to US President Barack Obama at the National Security Council,
- A Congressional briefing on Europeans of African descent in the United States Senate chaired by U.S. Representative Alcee L. Hastings of Florida and U.S. Senator Benjamin Cardin of Maryland of the U.S. Helsinki Commission,
- Democracy and regional focal points at the U.S. Department of State,
- U.S. civil rights organisations and leaders including Rev. Jesse Jackson, Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, and the National Action Network
- Foundations and Research Institutions including the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, German Marshall Fund of the United States, Women Ambassadors Foundation, and Open Society Foundation,
• Scholars and students of Howard University, a historically black university.

This study tour is the first of its kind but will surely not be the last. As a manifestation of the US government’s commitment and support Congressman Alcee L. Hastings has submitted a resolution recognising people of African descent and Black Europeans. Among other things, the resolution calls for the adoption of a Joint US-European Union Action Plan to develop transatlantic solutions to combat racial discrimination and promote racial equality in Europe.

ENAR Vice-Chair Jallow Momodou said: “Millions of people of African descent still face severe injustice and discrimination in Europe as well as the United States. To eliminate discrimination against Blacks once and for all, greater cooperation and solidarity will be necessary, including transatlantic alliances through which best practices and solutions can be discussed and shared. The United States possesses both experience and expertise that Europe can benefit from”.

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Notes to the editor:
1. The European Network Against Racism (ENAR aisbl) stands up against racism and discrimination and advocates for equality and solidarity for all in Europe. We connect local and national anti-racist NGOs throughout Europe and act as an interface between our member organisations and the European institutions. We voice the concerns of ethnic and religious minorities in European and national policy debates.